



The Faithful Steward

A Newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America

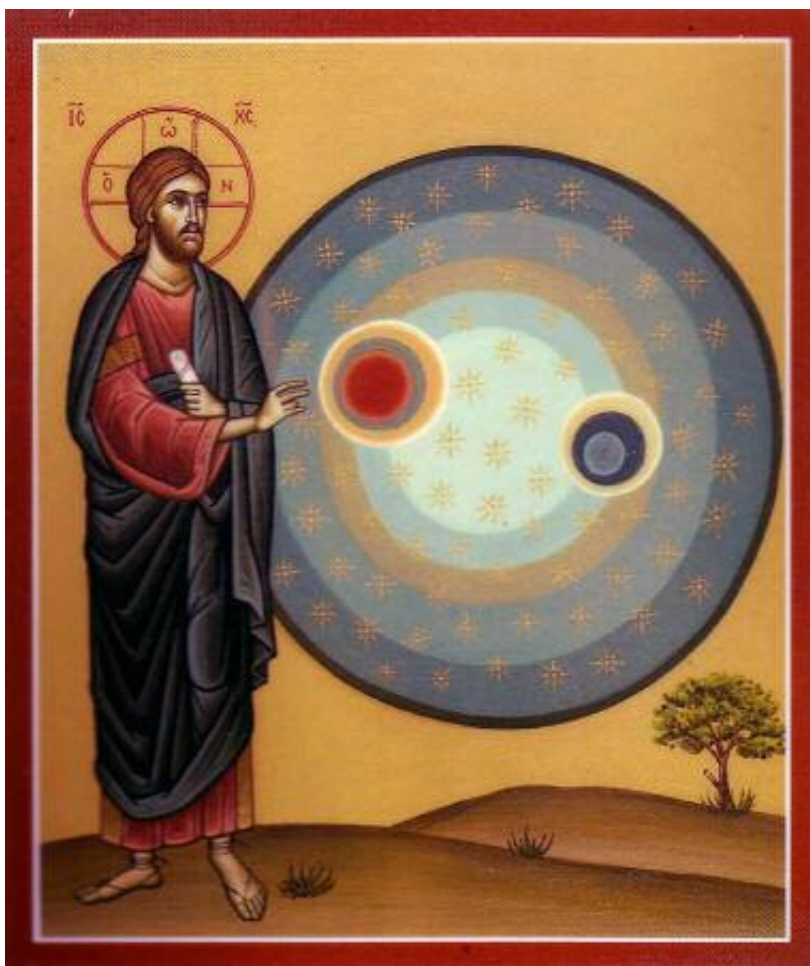
"We are all called to be faithful and wise stewards, ever waiting for the coming of our Lord ." LUKE 12:40-46

Intelligent Design: Religious Belief or Science?

Compiled from various sources and edited by Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston

In recent months, we have witnessed a flurry of articles in the press, interviews on radio and programs on television concerning "Intelligent Design." Inevitably, the media strive to present this issue as a variation of the old Evolution versus Creation debate, with "Intelligent Design" presented as a more sophisticated variant of "Creationism." But is this so? What, exactly, is Intelligent Design? Is it simply another form of religious belief, or is it based on hard, observable scientific data? Is it premised on the Holy Scriptures, or on the findings of the electron microscope? Does it find its evidence in the Book of Genesis, or in the fossil record? Is it true that scientists—"to a man," as the media insist—support Darwinian evolution, or is it not true, rather, that *hundreds* of scientists are currently expressing more and more serious doubts about Darwin's theory of evolution?

The information that follows below should help our readers sort this out and gain some insights into this burning issue.



Christ, the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God (I Cor. 1:24)

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What about Intelligent Design and Evolution?

Evolution: fact or theory? Many people assume it is simply a fact. Orthodox Christians who accept the truth about Creation, as it is recorded for us in our Holy Tradition, sometimes wonder how they can help others consider the possibility that there is a Creator. Our purpose is

to provide a starting point from which to evaluate the claims made by advocates of Evolution.

What is the Point of Evolution?

In 1859, Charles Darwin, in his book, *On the Origin of Species*, proposed a theory that the various species of animals resulted from a process of “natural selection,” with the “favored races” being preserved in the “struggle for life.” Is this merely a scientific theory, or is there more?

Darwin was fully aware that his idea was a frontal assault on the very notion of an Intelligent Designer behind the world.

In fact, he might very well have formulated it precisely for that purpose. The idea of a spiritual realm apart from matter seems to have been anathema to him as a young man already. The primary inspiration for his theory of natural selection did not come from observation of nature. Perhaps not incidentally, his writings also reveal glimpses of specific antipathy to the God of the Bible, especially concerning His right to judge unbelievers in eternity.

What Challenge to Darwin is Found in the Details of Life?

Evolutionary theory proposes that life forms start out at a very simple level and then, by natural selection, eventually become more and more complex as changes occur. However, biochemical and molecular biological research today continues to gather convincing evidence that the living cell is totally useless unless, and until, it reaches its final form, and then, having reached that form, any change at all actually destroys, not enhances, its function. Darwin’s greatest challenge came from the question of how the individual cell developed. Recent scientists studying this issue (especially since the development of the electron microscope) have described the living cell as “irreducibly complex.”

More and more scientists are reaching the conclusion that living organisms, even the most “simple,” show clear evidence of a designer or creator because of their incredible complexity at even the most fundamental levels. The scientific literature is strangely silent when it comes to the question of how these molecular structures, the basis of life, developed. How could all this have evolved?

Has Science Accepted Intelligent Design?

Proponents of Intelligent Design have made great headway in recent years. Their findings have added muscle to the long-held arguments of the Second Law of Thermodynamics which, simply put, says that the way of all things, both living and non-living, is to go from a state of order to various states of increasing disorder, not the other way around. Darwinian evolution is a violation of the Second Law of Thermodynamics.

Other arguments being put forward are based on dubious dating-methods used by evolutionists and on the fossil record—the latter still showing no conclusive transitional stages in types or kinds (one would think every strata of fossils should contain billions of transitional forms). Together, these evidences, along with many others, form a convincing case for the idea of Intelligent Design.

What Stands in the Way of Intelligent Design?

Evolutionists appear unwilling to address the findings of biochemistry and other related fields. They are quick to say they are defending science, yet when confronted by an Intelligent Design paradigm that explains the data better than their own (such as on the human eye, a bird’s wing, or the processes of blood clotting), they offer no scientific defense at all. Instead they lash out, ridiculing the Intelligent Design paradigm as nothing more than the ideas of those who are “religious.” That is, instead of refuting the idea, they attack the person who proposes the idea.

What is Happening in the Scientific Community?

Those who prefer the Creation and Intelligent Design explanation for life cannot be conveniently stereotyped as backward, ignorant, flat-earth fanatics. On the contrary, believers in special Creation and Intelligent Design are discerning, rational people—tens of millions of them—who, upon weighing the evidence, have dismissed the evolutionary theory as untenable. And these millions are being joined by growing numbers of biologists, geologists, paleontologists, physicists, medical doctors, mathematicians and other professionals in the pure and applied sciences.

A molecular biologist explains that evolutionary theory has an influence “far removed from biology” and is one of the “most spectacular examples in history

of how a highly speculative idea, for which there is no really hard scientific evidence, can come to fashion the thinking of a whole society and dominate the outlook of an age” (Denton, p. 358).

As one biochemist puts it, “To a person who does not feel obligated to restrict his search to unintelligent causes, the straightforward conclusion is that many biochemical systems were designed. They were designed not by the law of nature, not by chance and necessity; rather, they were planned. Their designer knew what the systems would look like when they were completed, then took steps to bring the systems about. Life on earth at its most fundamental level, in its most critical components, is the product of intelligent activity” (Behe, p.193).

Is There Room for Intelligent Design?

Intelligent Design, on its own merits, can be argued effectively without a single reference to religious belief. This natural knowledge of an Intelligent Designer/Creator is not the same as advancing a set of specific theological and doctrinal beliefs about that Creator.

If evolutionists persist in saying that creation cannot be divorced from religion, then they themselves must be prepared to admit that their “orthodoxy”—that life in all its beauty, organization and complexity arose from random mutations and other Darwinian speculations—is just as dogmatic, just as much an act of faith and religion as what they scorn. If Creation is theistic, calling for an intelligent, purposeful Author of Life, then accidental Evolution is atheistic, denying the existence of that Author and any supernatural acts wrought by His hand. For generations, Evolution, with all its weaknesses and unexplained gaps, has reigned unchallenged in public life, in our zoos, science centers, museums and mass media, and yes, perhaps most clearly in our schools. The theory of Evolution is simply handed down as fact. Only now, finally, is Evolution being contested on its own terms: objective science.

On the blackboards of the public-school science classrooms, and in the pages of textbooks, and on the screens of the media, the time has come for the words “evolution,” “naturalism” and “neo-Darwinism” to make room for “Intelligent Design.” Anything less, based on the evidence, would be intellectually dishonest.

Can We “Baptize” Evolutionary Theory?

It would be a mistake on our part to think that simply by presenting the evidence for Intelligent Design, a person will become a Christian. Believing that God is our Heavenly Father Who created the heavens and the earth is an article of faith. Believing that there is an intelligent designer is a far cry from believing that we are sinners in need of a Saviour and then trusting in the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who is our Saviour from sin, death and the power of Satan. Such a living hope is not a matter of scientific study or analysis.

The Church believes, teaches and confesses that Adam and Eve were real, historic individuals and that the Genesis account of Creation is true, as rightly understood in the light of Holy Tradition, and not merely a “myth” or a “story” made up to explain the origin of all things.

We would also be making a very serious error simply to accept the theories of science without questions. Orthodox Christians have no need to fear the findings of science, nor do they have any reason to give “science” more credence than they give their Orthodox Christian Faith.

Science’s Assumptions

Author Frank Morriss (*The Wanderer*, August 11, 2005) discusses the assumptions that scientists commonly make. “Assumptions drawn by many scientists to support a prejudice against creation and in favor of a purely accidental process from non-life to evolving life is the mainstay of evolution. Assumptions, not facts. This is basic to their mindset. The deduction that order and purpose indicate a Designer—not a whirl of a cosmic roulette wheel—is anathema to them.

“It comes down to scientists demanding that we accept the principle that mathematical odds will bring about everything, just given enough time.

“They cannily fail to show just how much time is needed, since there is a decided rub to their claim—namely, that evidence has so far failed to prove a “missing link” between one species and any other, higher species. Despite the Darwinian claim, scientists, with discovery after discovery, have pushed the appearance of *homo sapiens* further and further back, even to the very dawn of time as science reckons it.

“The creature which is midway between brute and Man simply hasn’t appeared. Scientists must therefore

simply posit this process as having happened, in effect asking us to accept it on faith—faith, that is, in the infallibility of science, whereas they deny such infallibility to God’s revelation.”

Not Merely An Exercise of Faith

Elsewhere, Morriss offers the following insights into this subject: “Were any thinking person to come upon a pump delivering water to a garden planted high above the level of the pond from which the water was being drawn, there could be only one rational conclusion: Some intelligence had designed a means to overcome the law of gravity, using other natural laws to send life-giving water high above the level dictated by such gravity. No one would consider as rational any suggestion that this came about by accident, or by the long effect of the environment on all the elements involved in the process.

“Or were you to come upon a supply of fresh protein kept fresh in the form of living animals in some ingenious way without technical means, you would conclude that some intelligence was at work there. Yet that is exactly what is observable in the lives of certain wasps, that must make available for their off-spring living protein of caterpillars to feed upon. But the parent wasps will be dead before their eggs are hatched, and hungry baby wasps need sustenance in order to survive. The problem is solved by the female wasp stinging the caterpillars with just enough venom, delivered in just the right place, for the future meal to go on living after the soon-to-die female wasp lays her eggs upon the caterpillar’s back. Thus, when her eggs hatch, they will have a living caterpillar to feed upon. One thrust of her stinger slightly off the proper spot would kill the caterpillar. Injection of too much venom would do the same. Since the wasp can’t apply reason to this exercise, it follows that some other intelligence did so.

“It is clear from these and many other deductions from observable data that the argument for Intelligent Design isn’t merely an exercise of faith, but rather of reason, even as scientists form their principles via thought processes, a power, incidentally, showing Intelligent Design for those possessing intelligence, namely, humans. Behind the argument that Intelligent Design is purely a thing of faith is the desire on the part of Darwinists to suggest that the argument is entirely subjective, or perhaps a thing of imagination, or an attempt to foist off ignorance in order to posit a divine power

at work in the universe. This is *ad hominem* argumentation in its most desperate employment” (*The Wanderer*, Aug. 25, 2005).

A Stunning Blow

Recently, various aspects of “mainline thinking” in scientific circles have suffered “a stunning blow” from recent fossil discoveries. For example, with the discovery of a dinosaur bone containing soft, fibrous tissue and complete blood vessels—along with red blood cells—yet another major blow has been dealt the evolutionary belief that dinosaurs died out 65-70 million years ago. This bone, belonging to a *Tyrannosaurus rex*, instead has provided additional strong evidence that dinosaurs have been around in relatively recent times, for the tissue and blood cells should have dissolved millions of years ago in the evolutionists’ own timescale.

This remarkable discovery (by an evolutionist, Dr. Mary Schweitzer of the University of Montana) offers immensely powerful support to the idea that dinosaur fossils are not millions of years old at all, but were mostly fossilized under catastrophic conditions. The discovery was made when researchers were forced to break open the leg bone of a *T. rex* fossil to lift it in a helicopter. Dr. Schweitzer has been cited as saying that inside the bone, the blood vessels were flexible, and that in some instances, you could squeeze out their contents!

Will this new evidence ever cause anyone in the evolutionist community to stand up and say there’s something obvious about the emperor’s new clothes? Not likely, for almost certainly this astonishing discovery will become an “accepted” phenomenon that even “stretchy” soft tissues must be somehow capable of surviving in solid rock for millions of years and “stretching” beyond belief the idea that the evolutionary timetable concerning dinosaurs can be true.

The Hoaxes

Coupled with these discoveries are accounts of repeated scientific hoaxes. These fabrications, which litter the trail of Darwinian history, of course, serve only to undermine the credibility of the current scientific “orthodoxy.” For instance, Reiner Protsch, an influential German scientist, a supposed expert in carbon dating, has been exposed as a forger and plagia-

rizer and his dating of the northern European “Neanderthal man” has been found to be bogus. During a routine check of Protsch’s work last year, it was found that a skeleton he had dated at 27,400 years was actually that of a man who died only 250 years ago. Another skeleton, which Protsch had dated at 21,300 years is actually 3,300 years old (“Anthropologist resigns in dating disaster,” World Net Daily, Feb. 19, 2005). Chris Stringer of London’s National History Museum said: *“What was considered a major piece of evidence showing that the Neanderthal once lived in northern Europe has fallen by the wayside. We are having to rewrite prehistory.”* Frankfurt University president Rudolf Steinberg apologized for the university’s failure to curb Protsch’s misconduct for decades, admitting, “A lot of people looked the other way.”

Where Shall We Begin?

Where shall we begin with the hoaxes? Where will it end? Perhaps there are so many of them, because the people who perpetuate them have no scruples? After all, in a society that extols “the survival of the fittest” as the ultimate “virtue,” why should cheating be a problem? Fortunately, most scientists do not engage in such desperate fabrications. We say “desperate” because the Darwinists are so desperate for proofs and evidence for their theory.

For lack of space, we will limit ourselves to a brief list of the most famous hoaxes, with a short explanation where one is needed.

The Nebraska Man – Evolutionists constructed a theory about an entire race of men based on one fossilized tooth. This tooth was paraded as evidence for evolution in the 1925 Scopes trial. Heralded as the “missing link” in human evolution, this hypothesized figure was labeled the “Nebraska Man.” The artists created the entire skeleton, muscles, face, skull and hair—indeed, a whole family—from one molar tooth. Yes, a tooth! Not just any tooth, mind you, but what turned out to be an extinct pig’s tooth!

Java Man – In 1891, Dr. Eugene DuBois found the skull of a primate on the island of Java. One year later, he found a human-like thigh bone roughly 50 feet away from the skull’s original location. With great imagination, and no evidence linking the artifacts, “Java Man” was born.

The Piltdown Man – Championed by evolutionists as a “missing link,” this figure proved to be a portion

of a human skull pieced together with an orangutan’s jaw. Upon closer inspection, scientists discovered that the teeth had been filed down to resemble a human’s teeth.

Orce Man – In 1982, Spanish scientists found an ancient skull, which they claimed to be from a 17-year-old boy. Scientists touted this find as a “missing link.” Only days before a scheduled symposium, *UPI News* reported, “When French experts revealed the fact that ‘Orce Man’ was most likely a skull fragment from a four-month-old donkey, embarrassed Spanish authorities sent out 500 letters canceling invitations to the symposium.”

Haeckel’s embryos – Ernst Haeckel, a German developmental biologist, proposed an evolutionary theory titled “ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny.” According to this view, as a fertilized egg develops to form a human embryo, it repeats man’s evolutionary stages throughout history. This has been completely disproved. Further, his depictions of various embryos were proven to be completely faked. Despite this, Darwinists still use them in school textbooks!

Peppered Moth – In England, scientists studied the population trends of both black and gray peppered moths. Errantly, these scientists claimed that the moths had genetically evolved for survival. When this was disproved, University of Chicago evolutionary biologist Jerry Coyne admitted that “the prize horse in [evolutionists’] stable” had been debunked. Coyne added, “My own reaction resembles the dismay attending the discovery, at the age of six, that it was my father, and not Santa Claus, who brought the presents on Christmas Eve.”

Rhodesian Man – Some bones were found in a limestone cave in what was then British Rhodesia in southern Africa in 1921, and the news spread everywhere of the new discovery of the “ancient” Rhodesian Man. The find consisted of the bones of three or four family members: a man, a woman, and one or two children. The bones were dug out by a mining company and not by an experienced scientist, so much of the circumstances of their death and life-style are unknown. Only the skull of the man survived. However, later an anatomist declared the bones to be those of a normal modern human. The “million-year-old man” had dental caries from a modern diet, and a bullet or crossbow hole in his scalp. Maybe not as old as they thought?

Taung African Man – Another skull found in a cave in South Africa, in 1924, was proclaimed as the

fabled missing link. Experts later determined it to be the skull of a young ape.

Nutcracker Man – More mismatched bones, found in 1959. The skull is ape-like, the jaw was much larger, (which is where the name Nutcracker originated), and some nearby bones were human. Louis Leakey later conceded it was just an ape skull. Foiled again!

Fibberpithecus? – Yet another ancient man discovered more recently, created out of what was thought to be a humanoid collarbone. Tim White exposed it in 1983, showing it to be a dolphin's rib. (See *New Scientist*, April 28, 1983: *Humanoid Collarbone Exposed as Dolphin's Rib*. I. Anderson). Aww.

Alligator Femur and Horse Toe – More antics. Tim White made a remarkable statement: "The problem with a lot of anthropologists is that they want so much to find a hominoid, that any scrap of bone becomes a hominoid bone." In the same article, Allan Walker said that skilled anthropologists have erroneously described the femur of an alligator and the toe of a horse as clavicles! Mistakes and hoaxes again and again.

Alas, there are many: The "Archaeopteryx Fake," the "Yale DNA Hybridization Scandal," Paul Kammerer and the Midwife Toad Hoax, and others. As Mark Twain quipped in his book, *Life on the Mississippi*, "There is something fascinating about science. One gets such wholesale returns of conjecture out of such trifling investment of facts."

Defections

This, in turn, is leading to other developments: scientists—in growing numbers—are defecting *en masse* from the Darwinian camp!

More than 400 scientists have signed onto a growing list from all disciplines who are "skeptical of claims for the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life."

"Darwin's theory of evolution is the great white elephant of contemporary thought," said Dr. David Berlinski, a mathematician and philosopher of science with Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture (CSC). "It is large, almost completely useless, and the object of superstitious awe."

Discovery Institute first published its "Statement of Dissent from Darwin" in 2001. It was a direct challenge to statements made in PBS' "Evolution" series asserting that no scientists disagreed with Darwinian evolution.

"The fact is that a significant number of scientists are extremely skeptical that Darwinian evolution can explain the origins of life," said Dr. John G. West, associate director of the CSC. "We expect that as scientists engage in the wider debate over materialist evolutionary theories, this list will continue to grow, and grow at an even more rapid pace than we've seen this past year."

Recently, 29 scientists, including eight biologists, have signed the "Scientific Dissent From Darwinism." The list includes over 70 biologists total.

The most recent signatories are Lev V. Belousov and Vladimir L. Voeikov, two prominent Russian biologists from Moscow State University. Dr. Voeikov is a professor of bioorganic chemistry and Dr. Belousov is a professor of embryology and Honorary Professor at Moscow State University; both are members of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences.

"The ideology and philosophy of neo-Darwinism which is sold by its adepts as a scientific theoretical foundation of biology seriously hampers the development of science and hides from students the field's real problems," said Professor Voeikov.

"Lately in the media there's been a lot of talk about science versus religion," said West. "But such talk is misleading. This list is a witness to the growing group of scientists who challenge Darwinian theory on scientific grounds."

Other prominent biologists who have signed the list include evolutionary biologist and textbook author Dr. Stanley Salthe, Dr. Richard von Sternberg, an evolutionary biologist at the Smithsonian Institution and the National Institute of Health, the National Center for Biotechnology Information; and Giuseppe Sermoni, Editor of *Rivista di Biologia/Biology Forum*. The list also includes scientists from Princeton, Cornell, UC Berkeley, UCLA, Ohio State University, Purdue, and the University of Washington.

Still Unconvinced

If naturalistic evolution is supposed to be a fact, why do so few people believe it? Nearly 150 years after Charles Darwin wrote his *Origin of Species*, most people still overwhelmingly reject the theory of evolution. This fact was verified in a November 2004 CBS poll in which only 13% agreed with the statement, "Humans evolved, God did not guide the process." In contrast, 55% affirmed the statement, "God created humans in

their present form.” Twenty-seven percent took a middle position by affirming the statement, “Humans evolved, God guided the process.” The poll reveals a surprisingly strong rejection of Darwinian evolution and its assertion that humans evolved from lower life forms by a purely random process.

Since Darwin’s time, many scientists have presented macroevolution between species as a fact. But as the CBS poll shows, proponents of evolution have not been able to convince the public. Why do most people look at evolution and say, “I don’t believe it?”

Could it be that the case for evolution has not been made clear enough? That is doubtful. When it comes to the public square, evolution has been the only show in town. Could those religious rascals be the problem? But they are just one-third of the U.S. population. This hardly explains the 55% who reject any form of evolution and the 87% who reject random evolution.

Why do most people reject evolution? There are at least two reasons. First, as the CBS poll showed, 55% in the U.S.A. believe that God created the universe and man directly. For them, belief that God created humans as they are is superior to the belief that man evolved through purely accidental factors.

Second, perhaps the evidence for evolution is really not that great. After all, much of the evidence trotted out as proof for evolution over the years has proven to be a hoax, or inconclusive, or mistaken. Evolutionists continually use old evidence of microevolution within species, but they still have not been able to show that one species can develop into another. Furthermore, as we saw, the history of the theory of evolution is littered with alleged “discoveries” for evolution that have been disproved later. Plus, many have pointed out that the fossil record simply does not indicate macroevolution. Evolution may be king in the secular courts and classrooms, but not in peoples’ minds.

Evolutionists may claim that the evidence is convincing to them. But one thing is clear—evolution is not comparable to other great scientific discoveries of which there is no doubt. Over 400 scientists, including representatives from Yale, Rice, and MIT, have taken issue with Darwinian evolution and signed a statement that questions “the ability of random mutation and natural selection to account for the complexity of life.”

The failure of proponents of evolution to persuade the American public has left itself open to serious competition from other origin theories, including those who believe that God did it all. While successfully deflecting

the attempts, evolutionists find themselves in serious combat with a more nimble and crafty opponent with the Intelligent Design Movement. Intelligent Design advocates are sending out an A-list of scholars with strong academic credentials, who offer carefully crafted arguments *against* evolution and *for* the presence of intelligent design in the universe. The ID movement has thrown evolutionists off stride, at least for a time. As William Dembski stated on Nightline, Darwinism is “the status quo” and Intelligent Design is “the new kid on the block” that is getting a lot of attention. Interestingly, even some evolutionists believe that Intelligent Design will be allowed into public classrooms in the next ten years.

There is no doubt that the theory of evolution has had a massive impact on the world, and it is not going away any time soon. Yet for all its influence, most people have not bought into its ideas. Is it that most people are simply dumb? Perhaps. Better yet, maybe they are people who know a seriously flawed argument when they see one.

For Further Study:

Michael Behe, *Darwin’s Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution* (New York: The Free Press, 1996).

William Dembski, *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology* (Downer’s Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1999).

Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Chevy Chase, Md.: Adler and Adler, 1985).

Carl Wieland, “Darwin’s Real Message, Have You Missed It?” *Creation Ex Nihilo* (14(4): 16-19, Sept.-Nov. 1992).

Pamphlets

“The World: God’s Creation,” by Hieromonk Haralampos

“Intelligent Design vs. Chance”

“Science Resurrects God”

DVD’s

“Unlocking the Mystery of Life”—the scientific case for Intelligent Design

“The Privileged Planet”—the search for purpose in the universe

“Icons of Evolution”—the growing scientific controversy over Darwin

Pamphlets and DVD’s are available from St. Philaret’s House, 1476 Centre Street, Roslindale, MA 02131-1417

Axios!



Hieromonk Demetrius, ordained July 17/30, Metropolitan Makarios, and Archimandrite Isaac at St Nektarios Greek Orthodox Cathedral, Toronto, ON



Hilarie, Krista, Metropolitan Ephraim, Fr. Andrew, ordained Nov. 21/Dec. 4, and Matushka Alexandra at Holy Dormition of the Theotokos parish, Concord, NH.



Archimandrite Adrian, Hieromonk Menas, ordained Sept5/18, his Aunt Cynthia and Uncle George Vlatas at Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Brookline, MA



Metropolitan Ephraim, Deacon Michael Waples, ordained July 20/August 2, and his immediate family at Prophet Elias Mission Parish, St. Paul, MN



Metropolitan Ephraim, Hierodeacon John, ordained August 29/ Sept 11, and fellow clergy at St Tatianas Mission Parish, Woodside, NY

Orthodox Christian Youth on the March

The Saint Mark of Ephesus Orthodox Cathedral Youth Group was established with the blessing of Fr. Christos Constantinou in 2002 in recognition that our Orthodox youth would benefit from meeting together outside of Divine Services on a frequent basis. Our Orthodox youth want and desire to discuss matters of faith, in part to acknowledge and to utilize the eyes of their heart.

It is essential that today's youth understand that our spiritual journey is also a call to "study the world as a whole, and to consider the universe, not by the light of worldly wisdom, but by that with which God wills to enlighten His servant, when He speaks to him in person without enigmas" (*Hexaemeron, Homily VI. St Basil the Great*). Our youth aspire to pray not simply as a routine, but with conscious awareness of prayer. They seek to act on their Orthodox Christian desire for an educated understanding of the Church and the Orthodox Christian life, including reaching out to others in need.

As youth go through the transition from childhood to young adults, they become more aware of the greater world around them and ask questions regarding that world including their role and responsibilities as Christians, and who precisely are their peers.

In its first three years of existence the Youth Group

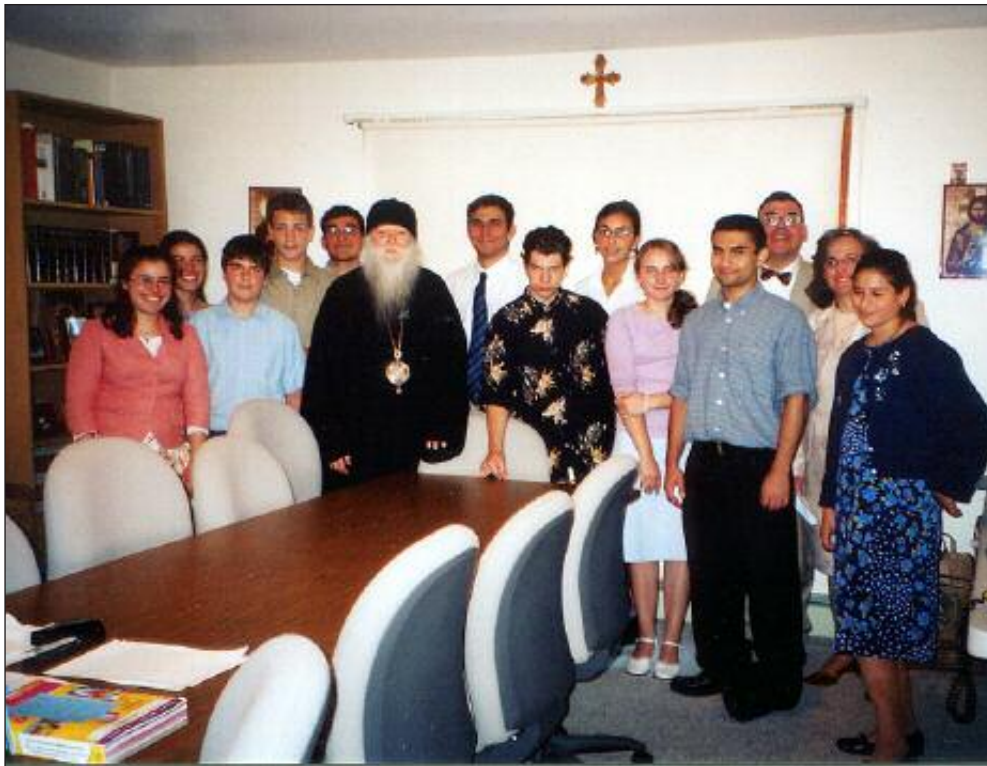
has conducted an examination of the Prayer of the Heart including readings from the *Philokalia* and *Way of the Pilgrim*. It has sung *Kalanda* at parishioners' homes, Homes for the Aged, as well as at Holy Transfiguration Monastery and Holy Nativity Convent.

The Group has conducted annual food drives and its most recent almsgiving project was to sponsor a successful "Katina Concert" at Boston University. From the \$1,000 net proceeds of that fundraiser, due to the prayers of many and the generosity of all who purchased tickets, and especially the selfless work of Katina and Deacon Christos Patitsas, MD, \$500 was recently given to the Metropolis of Boston

for its African missions with the desire that the funds be used to help orphans in Uganda. Another \$500 was donated to help the Philoptochos Society in its charitable work.

The youth newsletter "Ephesus" is composed entirely by the members of the youth group. The publication has been well received by the youth group and the community at large. Its latest issue included articles on Fr. Panteleimon's talk at Saint Anna's on March 14/27, 2005, an article "On Prayer in the Church" by Saint John of Kronstadt, a Question and Answer column, "Ask the 'Wise Sophia,'" a poem entitled "Faith" written by one of the members, and a club interview, among many other edifying and interesting topics.

Field trips have included a tour of the Boston Athenaeum, a bus trip to the Metropolitan Museum of New York for its exhibit on Byzantium, hikes up Big Blue in Canton, MA, bowling, and a recent tour of Saint Philaret House in Roslindale, MA.



Metropolitan Ephraim giving the Group a tour of St. Philaret House

The group is open to high school youth in grades 9 through 12, although some exceptions are made for youth who are in junior high school and are mature enough to participate.

Its youth group leaders Mr. Athanasios George and his wife Soteria act as supervisors. The meetings themselves are conducted by the youth using parliamentary procedure. In addition to the officer and

committee reports, there is a question box portion of the meeting where youth can ask questions about the faith, and hopefully have them answered. There is also a reading of the Sunday Epistle and Gospel, with an explanation session chaired by Mr. George.

Other activities have included a better appreciation of the services of the Church. For example, readings of the complete Kontakia of Saint Romanos Melodos on various feasts, as well as a discussion of Psalm 117, have been studied and explored by the Group. The service of Vespers was examined in 2003–2004.

The Group extends its Christian leadership within the

Cathedral as well as without. Many of the young ladies act as junior leaders in the Daughters of Saint Philothei, a youth group for girls ages 9–14 led by Mrs. Athena Antonopoulos. Many of the young men serve in the altar.

The leadership of our youth in an Orthodox Christian way of life, their enthusiasm, and most of all their love and devotion to our Saviour and our Orthodox Christian faith inspire young and old alike. May these heirs of the highest nobility, the sons and daughters of God, continue to live a life in Christ for many years, and may their hearts always beat with the noetic pulse of the Lord.



Metropolitan Ephraim and the Daughters of St. Philothei

Saint Mark's Cathedral Choir

"Nothing elevates the soul, nothing gives it wings as a liturgical hymn does."

St. John Chrysostom (*On Psalm 41*)

One of the unique aspects of St. Mark of Ephesus Orthodox Cathedral in Roslindale, MA, is its Byzantine choir. The St. Mark's Cathedral Choir chants in the traditional Byzantine style that has characterized the music of Orthodox Christian worship for well over a millennium. This sacred music developed in the Orthodox Christian East from the early days of the Eastern Roman Empire (c. 330 AD) until the fall of Constantinople in 1453, at which point Byzantine chant had crystallized as a unique tradition of music that employed tens of thousands of hymns in a system of eight musical modes. Following a period of relative stasis, this tradition saw a great revival in the 17th and 18th centuries, as the transmission of Byzantine chant (both by oral and written means) continued uninterrupted despite the 400 year Ottoman occupation of much of the Christian East.

The centuries-old marriage of oral and written transmission of this sacred musical tradition continues in the present day at St. Mark's Cathedral. Over the past 16 years, under the leadership and inspiration of Fr. Christos Constantinou, St. Mark's has developed a choir of some 10–12 young men, who chant not only the Divine Liturgy every Sunday, but

also various weekday and midnight services throughout the ecclesiastical year. In 1989, Fr. Christos initiated the process of forming a choir with the young men who had served with him for so many years in the altar at St. Mark's. He approached Demetrios Mihopoulos, the son of St. Mark's deacon Father John Mihopoulos, with the idea of learning Byzantine chant in both Greek and English. Fr. Christos and Demetrios began regular, intensive lessons that focused on learning the neumes, or symbols of traditional Byzantine musical notation, as well as the *prosomoia*, or fixed melodies, in all eight tones, for hymns throughout the year. This private tutelage lasted approximately six months, at which time seven other young men joined Demetrios in learning the liturgical music. Following six more months of extensive rehearsals as a complete unit, the choir chanted a few Saturday liturgies, finally chanting the Divine Liturgy at St. Mark's feast day in February of 1990, a hierarchical service attended by many parishioners and clergy. According to Demetrios, the choir was very nervous before this particular service, but he knew they would do well owing to Fr. Christos' painstaking preparation of them over the past year.

At this time, the leadership duties of the choir were shared by Demetrios, Elias Constantinou (son of Fr. Christos), and Petros Kayas. Additional leadership of the *isokratima* (the section of the choir responsible for chanting the fundamental tonic notes of each hymn) was provided by Raphael Mihopoulos. These four original members of the choir, along with Nicholas Barboutis, are still members today.

Over the years, the choir at St. Mark's has continued to improve and evolve. One of the most notable developments has been the infusion of young talent. Since 2000, the direction and development of the choir has been managed by Spyridon Antonopoulos, a professionally trained musician with a Master's of Music in Vocal Performance from the New England Conservatory of Music. Spyridon joined the choir in 1995, at the age of 15, and he gradually took on the responsibility of directing the choir and training new members. He received his training in Byzantine chant primarily from Fr. Christos, and informally, from exposure to the priests and chanters at St. Mark's and Holy Transfiguration Monastery. Further additions to the choir included Artemios Kayas, who joined in 1995, and John Fagan, who joined three years later. Artemios provided support on melody and ison, while

John supported the ison section for nearly four years. Other past members of the choir are Nektarios Mihopoulos, Dorian Constantinou, Seraphim Tsamaras, Nicholas Papoutsis, Dionysius Rapsomanikis (now Brother Dionysius at Holy Transfiguration Monastery), John Rapsomanikis, Nicholas and Alexander Liadis.

Spyridon did not have to go very far to find new talent for the choir. His brother Demetri, also a dedicated musician, began chanting with the choir in 1999 and now helps anchor the melody section, even directing the choir when necessary. In addition, Spyridon and Demetri's younger cousins, George Fitopoulos, Constantine George, and Panagiotis George, are the most recent additions to the choir, providing much talent, enthusiasm, and dedication.

Since its inception, the choir has chanted such Classical masterpieces as Daniel Protopsaltis' (+1789) Communion hymn for the Feast of the Nativity of the Saviour, "The Lord hath sent redemption unto His people," Chourmouzos the Archivist's (+1840) Communion hymn "I will take the cup of salvation," and St. John Koukouzelis' (+1360), "Of old the Prophets" (chanted during the vesting of a hierarch). In recent years, the choir has endeavored to master many new hymns from the Classical Byzantine repertoire, which have been incorporated into the choir's regular repertoire. Most recently, the choir has added Gregory Protopsaltis' (+1821) Cherubic Hymn and accompanying liturgical responses in the Third Tone, in both Greek and English. At the Feast of Pascha in 2004, the choir chanted for the first time the Paschal Canon of St. John of Damascus (+750), in the First

Tone, in English (translated from the Greek by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery). Finally, for this year's Feast of Pentecost, the choir introduced the Communion Hymn, "Thy good Spirit shall lead me..." composed by Peter of Ephesus (+1840). Learning new liturgical repertoire as a choir, in a unified manner, has been of prime importance to Fr. Christos, for in the words of St. Basil the Great, "Psalmody—bringing about choral



Fr. Christos and the St. Mark of Ephesus Cathedral Choir

singing, a bond, as it were, toward unity, and joining people into a harmonious union of one choir—produces also the greatest of blessings: love."

St. Mark of Ephesus Orthodox Cathedral is truly blessed to have such a dedicated group of young men not only providing the necessary chanting services on a weekly basis, but also devoting so much of their time and energy towards improving their skills and their understanding of the sacred musical tradition of Byzantine chant, an effort that is truly lifelong in scope. It is our hope that their efforts may continue and be multiplied, and that the choir may continue to chant, 'singing and making melody...' (Eph. 5:19) at St. Mark's for generations to come.

THE WORK OF THE BENEVOLENT MISSIONARY SOCIETY

-A Letter to the Metropolis of Boston Parishes-

October 22/November 4, 2005

Holy Seven Youths of Ephesus

Dear Fathers and Brethren:

With the grace of God and your assistance, we have been able to make some headway in our missionary work in Uganda and Kenya. We have been able to establish some individual projects to help our clergy there support themselves, and also to help some orphans, as you will see below.

In the past two years we have made contributions to address immediate needs of the parishes and children. Monies were sent for food, medicine, educational materials, and school fees. We also initiated a few small income generating projects for the clergy. For instance, we have financed a grain mill in Kangulumira, Uganda, [we paid for the purchase of land, a 40hp electric grain mill machine, installed 3phase electricity, and built a storage room]. This project has provided employment for several needy people in the community, has paid for school fees, books and uniforms for 184 children and has provided basic sustenance for several orphans.

In Golomolo village, in Uganda, we have supplied food and some educational materials, repaired a water pump so they can have clean water to drink. We plan to initiate a small project to generate income so that they can become financially independent, if possible.

In Mytiana, we have financed a banana plantation to provide employment for the clergy.

In Seeta, we have sent monies to pay for the support of 32 orphans.

In Kiboga, we have started a sewing training school for young ladies.

Our long term goal is to fund a project in each of the above villages of Uganda that would generate enough income to support the clergy, the faithful and the orphans in those areas.

At their own expense, some members of our Missionary Society visit annually our parishes there to insure that the funds are spent for the purpose intended and are not wasted.

What I am asking you to do is the following: If your parish would devote one Sunday a year [only one Sunday out of the fifty-two!] to sponsor a banquet on that day and call it "The Missionary Banquet," this would serve the purpose of helping the parishes in Africa, and we could extend our work there considerably. One more thing that all of us should have in mind is that the Missionary Society has some administrative costs also — specifically travel expenses to and from Africa [a round trip airline ticket costs about \$1,500], hotel expenses while visiting there, and postage costs for sending catechetical materials. Many individuals are already sending contributions for this, and we are eternally grateful to them.

We are starting to get on a solid footing in Uganda and Kenya. God willing, the Metropolis of Toronto — which has promised to help Kenya — will also organize its own Benevolent Missionary Society in the near future. Please see what you can do about organizing a "Missionary Banquet" in your parish as well.

Thank you and God bless you for your support.

In Christ,
+Ephraim, Metropolitan

St. Demetrios Family Camp, 2005

For 4 days, from Sunday evening July 31 through Thursday, August 4, 2005, families of St. Demetrios Church camped together on the beach alongside a quiet section of the Pacific Ocean north of Santa Barbara. Fifteen adults and 19 children participated; including Father Nicholas Liberis and Father Deacon Michael Whipple and their families. St Demetrios Church located in Pomona, near Los Angeles, serves all of Southern California, from Bakersfield to San Diego. Many of the parishioners drive at least 50 miles each way to attend services. The family camp provides adult parishioners the opportunity, at least briefly, to relax together and discuss matters of common concern. And for the children, who rarely have the opportunity to play together, it's a chance to develop life-long friendships, all the while just having fun. As the camp ended, all who attended began looking forward to the wonderful time, atmosphere and company that next year's camp is sure to offer.



Presbytera Georgia holding camp children, Diaconissa Annabel, John Engel, Deacon Michael and Fr Nicholas enjoying breakfast



Happy campers Xenia, Anna Zoe, and Cecelia

Russian Cosmonaut Visits Oinousses Convent

by Hieromonk Basil

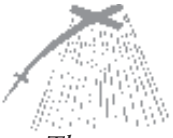
In the summer of 2005, Russian cosmonaut Valeri Polyakov took part in an International Conference about Space Medicine in Oinousses. He was up in space 2 times. One of these times he stayed up for over 340 days. The Americans asked the Russians why they didn't bring him down. They answered that they did not have the money. So the Americans did the job and Polyakov returned back safely. The other time the spacecraft caught fire inside and Polyakov, who was alone in space, extinguished the fire using his uniform. Mayor Evangelos Angelakos of Oinousses gave the cosmonaut and some other participants a tour of the convent area and then we had coffee in the *archondariki*. I had a chance to ask him who the first cosmonaut was. After a few moments he said, "Yuri Gagarin." Somebody thought it was Icarus, but Polyakov noted that was a myth. Then I explained to him about the Prophet Elias and gave him a little icon of the fiery prophet which the abbess handed to me. The Mayor had a few color photos of the cosmonaut and asked him to autograph each of them. I got a copy and asked Polyakov to dedicate it to Fr. Nicholas of Holy Transfiguration Monastery.



To Fr. Nicholas living in Boston USA,
from a Russian cosmonaut 04-09-2005



Hieromonk Basil, Valeri Polyakov,
Mayor Evangelos Angelakos, and Fr. Nectarios
in front of the convent in Oinousses



About Our Logo *A Divine Confirmation*

The cross on our masthead commemorates the miraculous appearance of the sign of the Cross near Athens on Sept. 14 (according to the traditional Orthodox calendar) in 1925. Anti-Orthodox and secularist forces in power in Greece, together with the Ecumenical Patriarchate, had forced the changing of the traditional church calendar in 1924 as a first step toward uniting with the heterodox churches of the West. Shining in the evening sky on the traditional feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross, this extraordinary appearance of the Cross is a divine confirmation of Holy Tradition in the Orthodox Church and of the calendar as one facet of Holy Tradition.

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The Faithful Steward is the official newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America. Under the editorship of Metropolitan Ephraim of Boston, *The Faithful Steward* appears three times yearly, and is delivered free of charge to the faithful of the Holy Metropolis of Boston. For others, a donation of \$1.50 an issue is requested.

THE DIOCESE NEEDS SUPPORT

“Every good giving and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights” (James 1:17). The perfect gift is the one that only membership in the Church can give: the knowledge of true worship and the grace of the Holy Mysteries. But our era suffers from a famine of truth and the true worship of God. In our weak way, we try to feed those who hunger for God. Your prayers and your donations help the Church in this awe-inspiring ministry. Another way to help is to make a bequest to the Church in your will. Remember that God loves a cheerful giver. Also remember that *The Faithful Steward*, although delivered free of charge to all members of our Church, is in need of your support.



The Faithful Steward

A Newsletter of the Holy Orthodox Church in North America

1476 Centre St
Roslindale, MA 02131-1417